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Sanitary report from Ponce.

PONCE, PORTO RICO, *March 17, 1899.*

SIR: I have the honor to make the following weekly report as directed:

I have made no changes in my office as yet, but the recent vacation of several rooms in the custom house will probably soon result in my having better office room. Lieut. Col. F. A. Hill has been relieved from duty as collector of customs here; Capt. E. D. Smith, Nineteenth Infantry, has replaced him.

Smallpox is decreasing here, but there are still a number of cases. It is difficult to state the exact number of cases in the city and port, as the report always includes some of the outlying districts. I estimate that there are reported about 50 cases in the city and 1 in the port. Most of these have been removed to isolation hospitals; a few are confined in their homes under a yellow flag. The disease is not severe. * * *

From information I have gathered and inspections I have made myself, I am satisfied that neither the harbor coast line nor any of the near by islands will prove satisfactory as a site for a quarantine station. There is, however, a large island lying about 8 miles off Ponce which may serve the purpose. It will take some time to make a visit to the place and, as I have no assistant, I have as yet not attempted it. The smaller islands in the vicinity are all, as far as I can learn, totally unfit. I have not seen all of them, but I have visited one of the largest, and I have had credible information concerning the others.

Respectfully, yours,

C. H. LAVINDER,

Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
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